

SECRET INFORMATION REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY **Rumania**

DATE DISTR. 30 April 1948

SUBJECT **Police Action against Black Market
Currency Operations; Counterfeit
US Currency**

NO. OF PAGES

PLACE
ACQUIRED **25X1C**

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE 17

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1X

1. In 1945, when transactions in gold and gold coins were being conducted freely, the Communists took a great many motion pictures inside the Bucharest Exchange. It is believed that they thus obtained pictures of all the professional money dealers and consequently had a complete file for the authorities to use in the enforcement of the laws against dealings in foreign exchange after the Monetary Stabilization of 15 August 1947.
2. As a result the police have been able to apprehend many persons guilty of violations of the law against foreign currency transactions and have established very effective control over black market currency operations. Very few professional money dealers will risk the 25-year prison term provided by the law, and this factor, together with the scarcity of lei, the high taxes, et cetera, have lowered the current black market rate for the dollar to around 280-300 lei.
3. There have been numerous instances of the use of counterfeit United States dollar notes in recent transactions.
4. It is alleged that the Rumanian police have recently acquired a stock of counterfeit US banknotes in denominations of \$20, \$50 and \$100 which were made by the Germans during the war. The Rumanian police are passing them out in an effort to locate dealers in foreign currency. These counterfeit notes are said to be skillfully made, but the paper on which they are printed does not contain silk threads. This would seem to explain why so many of the US notes now in circulation in Bucharest have perforations; the perforations are evidently the result of tests with needles to determine whether the threads in the paper are real.
5. It is reportedly extremely difficult to obtain US notes as most dealers have decided to operate on police terms to avoid arrest.

Document No. 011

NO CHANGE IN Class. III
DECLASSIFIED
Class. CHANGED TO: TS
DDA Recd. 4 Apr 77
Auth: DDA REG. 77 116
Date: 7 Apr 1978 By: 023

CLASSIFICATION SECRET

This document is hereby regraded to
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letter of 16 October 1978 from the
Director of Central Intelligence to the
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Next Review Date: 2008

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